DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 111 551 RC 008 732

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TITLE Residential Shifts and Ethnicity: A Study of Adjustment of Household Heads Recently Moved from Farms to Small Towns in Central Arizona.
PUB DATE 21 Aug 75
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society (San Francisco, California, August 21-24, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Adjustment (to Environment); *American Indians; Anglo Americans; Attitudes; Career Change; *Farmers; *Mexican Americans; Migrants; Negroes; *Relocation; Socioeconomic Influences
IDENTIFIERS *Arizona

ABSTRACT

The study surveyed the magnitude of the adjustment process for a sample of Anglo, Mexican American, Black, and American Indian families that had recently shifted their residences from farms to small towns in the western, irrigated sections of Pinal County, Arizona. Data were obtained from 374 (78 Anglo, 102 Black, 98 Mexican American, and 96 Indian) male heads of unbroken households, under 60 years of age, able to work, who had lived in the county for 12 months or longer, and were employed as farm workers or had been so employed within the past 10 years. Analysis involved cross classification of data into numerous contingency tables as well as scales and indexes. Scales utilized involved (1) material possessions, (2) the awareness of informants of certain local organizations and activities, and (3) statements concerning satisfaction with the urban environment and its correlates as they had experienced them. Among the findings were: (1) attitudes of Blacks and Anglos were more closely related to each other than to the other groups; (2) relatively more Mexican Americans and Indians remained in farmwork after moving into the towns; and (3) Mexican Americans demonstrated a higher level of satisfaction with their new residence even though they were still concentrated in farm occupations. (NQ)

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RESIDENTIAL SHIFTS AND ETHNICITY: A STUDY OF ADJUSTMENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS RECENTLY MOVED FROM FARMS TO SMALL TOWNS IN CENTRAL ARIZONA

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RC008732

Paper to be read at the Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting to be held in San Francisco August 21-24, 1975

RESIDENTIAL SHIFTS AND ETHNICITY: A STUDY OF ADJUSTMENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS RECENTLY MOVED FROM FARMS TO SMALL TOWNS IN CENTRAL ARIZONA

The social and economic condition of farm-reared persons in cities historically has been a popular research theme in Sociology (Freedman and Freedman, 1956; Beale, et. al., 1964). Fuller's assessment of research on rural worker adjustment to urban life emphasizes the importance of poor personal and family adjustment in the persistence of economic and social poverty among farm-reared persons in cities. Contributing factors to this situation include lack of education, technical training and ethnic affiliation (Fuller, 1970). Southern whites seem to suffer more than other groups in terms of finding employment, ability to adjust to many city conditions, and in finding satisfaction with city styles of life, and especially cities lying outside the southern, geographic orbit (Price, 1969). Blacks seem to adjust to city living readily if return to place of origin is a reliable indicator of satisfaction since most remain in the cities to which they migrate (Tarver, 1968). Mexican-Americans seem to be the happiest and least frustrated group in the urban areas even though their incomes generally are lower than other groups. (Price, 1969). Little research evidence is available for the Native American in cities although it is alleged that they are likely to live in the less desirable neighborhoods and work at the poorest paying jobs (Bahr, et.al., 1972).

Research results on the social and economic problems of adjustment of off-farm workers to cities are incomplete and often inconclusive. Fuller refers to them as fragmental, superficial, and generally unsatisfying. There has been little effort to determine the influence of size of place on the adjustment process although the assumption generally has been that farm to small town moves are not especially traumatic

since the farm resident is somewhat familiar with small town life before he moves into it. The major objective of this paper is to survey the magnitude of the adjustment process for a sample of Anglo, Mexican-American, Black and Indian families that have recently shifted their residences from farms to small towns of Central Arizona.

The Area In Perspective

The study limits were the western, irrigated sections of Pinal County, Arizona--an area that constitutes a part of the farming region of the arid West. The county, with more than 8,000 square miles, an area about equal to the State of Massachusetts, had a population of about 68,000 in 1970, approximately 52 percent rural. The eastern part of the county is mountainous with numerous copper mines, small farms and ranches. Commercial agriculture developed in the area after the beginning of the 20th century when a group of large operators began to cultivate cotton, still the dominant crop of the region.

Farms in the county have been heavy employers of farm labor since about 1920, much of it transient. The State Employment Service estimated in 1950 that farms in the county employed about 1,000 seasonal workers in the least busy month of February, and approximately 20,000 in November. Most workers were housed on individual farms and in labor camps that were fully occupied during the busy seasons. As farm technology in the area increased, the number of transient, as well as year-round, workers diminished. Most of those who remained in farm work moved into the towns, where recruiters could mobilize and transport them to the farms as they were needed. By 1970 all but a few key workers were in the towns.

Defining Adjustment

While results of empirical studies of the adjustment of farm workers to cities have been appearing in sociological literature for decades, no precise definition of the term exists. Moves from one spatial location to another obviously induce change, some of which may have pronounced and lasting influence on the migrants and their dependents. They are forced to cope with multiple dimensioned situations, psychic as well as physical, in nature. The outcome of this is some form of adaptation and adjustment. When the process involves off-farm migrants, rural customs may persist making for effective barriers to optimum social interaction. A complicating factor is that in some cases adjustment seems not to be regarded as a desirable alternative. It may involve the adoption of a deprived pattern of living in which the migrants remain for extended periods with little or no apparent feeling of stress. It has been noted elsewhere that many unemployed migrants are not simply people without work. They are people who may have learned to cope without work. (Padfield and Williams, 1973:81).

The definition of adjustment used in this analysis is both functional and attitudinal. The attitudinal syndrome relies on expressions of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with urban life. Functional adjustment, on the other hand, is measured in terms of behavior and economic status. Selective materials in both attitudes and behavior are combined into indexes or scales that, it is assumed, measure adjustment from a broader base than do single and often near independent items (Eaton, 1947).

Hypotheses

The general premise of this report is that off-farm workers who move into the smaller cities and towns generally do not experience major

adjustment problems since they are familiar with life in their local towns, probably have friends and relatives who live there, and to some extent have absorbed an urbanized style of life not at all foreign to the city. Often they are trained in skilled trades that enable them to compete with urban workers for skilled jobs. Specific hypotheses of the report include:

1. Anglos and Blacks, free from language problems, and more obvious cultural differences, experience less severe problems in adjustment.

2. Relatively more Mexican-Americans and Indians than Anglos and Blacks remain in farm work subsequent to migration.

3. Anglos rank higher occupationally than do other ethnic groups and enjoy somewhat higher incomes.

4. Mexican-Americans demonstrate a higher level of satisfaction with the new urban life style than do other groups.

5. A majority in each ethnic group expresses a higher level of preference for small cities and towns than for farm residence.

6. Measures of adjustment utilized give quantitatively different results by ethnic group.

Data Collection and Organization

The informants composing the sample were male heads of unbroken households, under 60 years of age, able to work, who had lived in the county for 12 months or longer, and were employed as farm workers or had been so employed within the past 10 years. Approximately 2,000 households were screened in the search for heads meeting these qualifications. Quota sampling procedures were used in the effort to secure a minimum of 100 informants from each ethnic group (Anglo, Mexican-American, Black and

Indian). In the process of editing, 42 of the schedules completed were discarded leaving a residue of 374 that were utilized in the analysis. The sample was of an area probability type.

The Development of Scales

The analysis involved cross classification of data into numerous contingency tables as well as scales and indexes, some of the latter failing to meet a set of qualifications established for them. Scales that were utilized involved (1) material possessions, (2) the awareness of informants of certain local organizations and activities, and (3) statements concerning satisfaction with the urban environment and its correlates as they had experienced them.

The Guttman technique was followed in developing the scales with slight modifications (Guttman, 1944). While the technique has certain weaknesses it does have the advantage of relatively facile testing for validity that many other scaling techniques do not have. The minimum Guttman requirements for scaling of dichotomous items were met with coefficients of reproductibility (C.R.) and coefficients of scalability (C.S.) either beyond or slightly under .9 and .6 respectively for each scale. Also, there was a good spread of item marginals (between .2 and .8), each response category had more non-error than error, and the errors were random. Intercorrelations between items in each of the scales generally were high as indicated in the following matrices:

Material Possessions

Item	1	2	3
1	....	.8205	.6276
2		....	.7149
3			....

(Where 1=hot water heater, 2=telephone, and 3=car or truck)

Awareness

Item	1	2	3	4
1	....	.1151	.5646	.3165
2		....	.6272	.5565
3			....	.6535
4				....

(Where 1=awareness of source for home mortgage loan,
2=awareness of existence of Airzona Job College,
3=awareness of Central Arizona College, and
4=awareness of Migrant Opportunity Program--MOP)

Satisfaction

Item	1	2	3	4
1	....	.4790	.2661	.1605
2		....	.7802	.5594
3			....	.3741
4				....

(Where 1=satisfied with present housing, 2=satisfied
with neighborhood, 3=satisfied with neighbors,
4=satisfied with children's friends)

For further validation each set of items selected to index a particular scale was factor analyzed separately. The loadings ranged from .409 to .763. All items in each of the scales were treated as dichotomous with a score of one for each response or possession and a zero score for each negative or ambiguous reply. After a determination was made of items to be used, scale scores were obtained by summing the numerical scores of the component items. These scores were then used as indicators of adjustment.

(Table 1 here)

Individual Scales as Measures of Adjustment

Satisfaction:

Generally the informants indicated a very high level of satisfaction with their new life styles with some variation between ethnic groups. Table 1.

(Tables 2 and 3 here)

Information in both Tables 2 and 3 show a high level of satisfaction with living in the local small cities and towns. Some differences exist between ethnic groups but such differences could well be chance rather than real.

Awareness of local organizations:

In the search for a satisfactory set of items for a scale or index of organization, some 20 were sifted and different combinations tested for scalability. The final selection was of four variables consisting of awareness of (1) one or more sources for home mortgage loans, (2) the existence of a local training college for the unskilled, (3) a locally based community college, and (4) a service organization for needy migrant workers (MOP program). These four items were combined into a scale that met the Guttman specification for a cumulative scale.

(Tables 4 and 5 here)

Possession of material goods:

Numerous combinations from a large battery of material items were made in the search for a set of items that would meet the Guttman requirements for a scale. While the possession of most items selected was relatively frequent, a wide range of errors appeared in the ethnic groups for each item classification leading to relatively low C. R.'s. As a final attempt to reach an acceptable C. R. and C. S. for the combined groups, the scale was limited to three items; hot water heater, telephone

and the possession of a car or truck in operating condition. The results are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Scale Scores and Ethnic Variation

As an additional measure of adjustment of the off-farm migrants to town life, scores for each of the three scales were cross-classified with education, amount of skill involved in present job, and income level controlling, in each case, for ethnicity. Each of the ethnic groups was split into a "high" and a "low" category based on scale scores that varied from 0 to 4 on two of the scales and from 0 to 3 on the third. Those scoring 3 and 4 on the two higher point scales (awareness and satisfaction) were labeled as "high scorers" and those scoring 0 through 2 as "low scorers." The third scale (material possessions) was divided into two categories, those possessing two items and those with one or none. Because of space limitations, only summary comments on the data are presented.

Awareness:

With the exception of the Mexican-Americans the high scorers on the awareness scale had completed substantially more schooling. More than twice as many Blacks and Indians with high scores as with low scores had completed 8 years of formal schooling or more. For the groups taken together the percentages were 48 for the high scorers and 31 for the low scorers. Differences were more marked for income. In each ethnic group the percentage of informants earning as much as $4,000 per year was substantially more for the high than for the low scorers. It was about 4 times as great for the high scorers among the Blacks and three times among the Mexican-Americans.

Satisfaction:

There was little evidence of association between satisfaction scores and the amount of schooling. For the Anglos the percentage of informants completing eight years or more in school was about the same for high as for low scorers. For the Indians and Blacks the percentages for the high scorers were slightly lower. Only among the Mexican-Americans was the difference marked, with about three times as many high as low scorers having completed as many as eight grades. Little evidence appeared in the scores to indicate relationship between satisfaction and job skill. Percentages of persons in the group doing skilled work were identical for high and low scorers among Mexican-Americans and Indians, with little difference within the other ethnic groups. Informants with high satisfaction scores were earning more money, however, with the percentages earning $4,000 per year or more greater for the high scorers in each of the ethnic groups.

Material possessions:

High scorers on the material possession scale were less well educated than the low scorers among the Mexican-Americans, Indians and Blacks. For the Anglos, however, the pattern was reversed with about twice as many high as low scorers having completed eight grades or more. High scorers definitely ranked higher in job skill, however, and in earnings. Differences were marked for each ethnic group and especially for the Anglos, Indians and Blacks. None of the Anglos earned less than $4,000 per year.

Conclusions

A general level conclusion from this analysis must be that off-farm migrants to small towns of the study area do not encounter major adjustment problems in their new and sometimes marginally urban environments. This appeared to be the case regardless of ethnic group or of mental conditioning for the move. Most appeared to possess enough creature comforts to

engender an adequate level of contentment, were satisfied with their new neighbors and neighborhoods and were reasonably knowledgeable about local organizations potentially important to them.

Hypotheses established for the study were only partially substantiated. In the order that they were posited the data show that:

1. Differences in adjustment were generally evident in ethnic group comparisons. Attitudes of Blacks and Anglos were more closely related to each other than to either of the other groups. None of the groups appeared to have had major adjustment problems or had perceived them as such.

2. Relatively more Mexican-Americans and Indians remain in farm work after moving into the towns. The percentage was 82 for the Mexican-Americans and 73 for the Indians.

3. Anglos rank higher in occupational status. Part of this condition may be related to the fact that they were the first to leave the farm.

4. Mexican-Americans demonstrate a higher level of satisfaction with their new residence even though they are still concentrated in farm occupations.

5. Anglos, as a rule, enjoy a higher level of living than other groups measured in terms of income and material possessions.

6. Results of measurement on the numerous scale items tested are closely associated with ethnic and cultural differences.

7. In general, informants from each ethnic group expressed a definite preference for urban residence even though many reported that they would prefer farm to nonfarm work.

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Table 1.--Items and adjustment scales for off-farm workers

Scale	Factor loadings item
AWARENESS	
1. Aware of local funds for home mortgages	.409
2. Aware of local Arizona Job College	.649
3. Aware of local Central Arizona College	.710
4. Aware of local Migrant Opportunity Program	.704
SATISFACTION	
1. Satisfied with present housing conditions	.441
2. Satisfied with neighborhood of residence	.763
3. Satisfied with neighbors	.602
4. Satisfied with children's friends	.536
MATERIAL POSSESSIONS	
1. Has telephone	.675
2. Has car or truck in operating condition	.726
3. Has hot water heater functioning	.730

Table 2.--Percentage of informants, by ethnic group, indicating satisfaction with selective elements of their town environments in Pinal County, 1972

Item	All informants %	Anglo %	Black %	Mex-Am. %	Indian %
Neighbors	95	97	95	93	96
Neighborhood	89	87	91	86	93
Housing quality	77	74	77	79	77
Children's friends	77	76	77	83	71
N	374	78	102	98	96

Table 3.--Percentage of informants reporting satisfaction with town environment, by scale score and by ethnic group in Pinal County, 1972

Scale score	All informants %	Anglo %	Black %	Mex-Am. %	Indian %
4	55	58	49	57	55
3	33	29	40	32	32
2	9	9	9	8	9
1	3	3	2	1	4
0	1	1	0	2	0
N	374	78	102	98	96

Table 4.--Percentage of informants aware of certain local organizations, by ethnic group, 1972

Item	All informants %	Anglo %	Black %	Mex-Am. %	Indian %
Source funds for home loans	35	53	32	33	26
Arizona Job College	76	69	85	81	67
Central Arizona College	87	72	92	84	81
Migrant Opportunity Program	71	92	78	74	59
N	374	78	102	93	96

Table 5.--Percentage of informants reporting awareness of selective local organizations by ethnic group and by scale score, 1972

Score	All informants %	Anglo %	Black %	Mex-Am. %	Indian %
4	22	26	26	25	15
3	44	49	47	50	32
2	20	15	17	18	31
1	9	7	8	5	16
0	5	7	2	2	6
N	374	78	102	98	96

Table 6.--Percentage of informants reporting the possession of select material items, by ethnic group, 1972

Item	All informants %	Anglo %	Black %	Mex-Am. %	Indian %
Hot water heater	89	97	95	90	73
Car or truck operating	77	91	83	90	46
Telephone	39	64	47	42	7
N	374	78	102	98	96

Table 7.--Distribution of families by material possessions score and by ethnic group, 1972

Score[1]	All informants %	Anglo %	Black %	Mex-Am. %	Indian %
3	36	63	41	39	4
2	39	29	45	45	34
1	20	5	12	15	45
0	6	3	2	1	17
N	374	78	102	98	96

[1]Scores represent response sums, e.g., an informant with all items would score 3, with none of the items, 0.